THE MORMONS

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A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OF

PENNSYLVANIA:

MARCH 26, 1850.

BY THOMAS L. KANE.

"O quantus fervor omnium religiosorum in principio suæ sanctæ institutionis fuit!"
De Im. J. C I. 18.

PHILADELPHIA:
KING & BAIRD, PRINTERS, SANSOM STREET.
1850.

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DISCOURSE.

A FEW years ago, ascending the Upper Mississippi in the Autumn, when its waters were low, I was compelled to travel by land past the region of the Rapids. My road lay through the Half-Breed Tract, a fine section of Iowa, which the unsettled state of its land-titles had appropriated as a sanctuary for coiners, horse thieves, and other outlaws. I had left my steamer at Keokuk, at the foot of the Lower Fall, to hire a carriage, and to contend for some fragments of a dirty meal with the swarming flies, the only scavengers of the locality. From this place to where the deep water of the river returns, my eye wearied to see everywhere sordid, vagabond and idle settlers; and a country marred, without being improved, by their careless hands.

I was descending the last hillside upon my journey, when a landscape in delightful contrast broke upon my view. Half encircled by a bend of the river, a beautiful city lay glittering in the fresh morning sun; its bright new dwellings, set in cool green gardens, ranging up around a stately dome-shaped hill, which was crowned by a noble marble edifice, whose high tapering spire was radiant with white and gold. The city appeared to

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cover several miles; and beyond it, in the back ground, there rolled off a fair country, chequered by the careful lines of fruitful husbandry. The unmistakeable marks of industry, enterprise and educated wealth, everywhere, made the scene one of singular and most striking beauty.

It was a natural impulse to visit this inviting region. I procured a skiff, and rowing across the river, landed at the chief wharf of the city. No one met me there. I looked, and saw no one. I could hear no one move; though the quiet everywhere was such that I heard the flies buzz, and the water-ripples break against the shallow of the beach. I walked through the solitary streets. The town lay as in a dream, under some deadening spell of loneliness, from which I almost feared to wake it. For plainly it had not slept long. There was no grass growing up in the paved ways. Rains had not entirely washed away the prints of dusty footsteps.

Yet I went about unchecked. I went into empty workshops, ropewalks and smithies. The spinner's wheel was idle; the carpenter had gone from his work-bench and shavings, his unfinished sash and casing. Fresh bark was in the tanner's vat, and the fresh-chopped lightwood stood piled against the baker's oven. The blacksmith's shop was cold; but his coal heap and ladling pool and crooked water horn were all there, as if he had just gone off for a holiday. No work people anywhere looked to know my errand. If I went into the gardens, clinking the wicket-

latch loudly after me, to pull the marygolds, heart's-ease and lady-slippers, and draw a drink with the water sodden well-bucket and its noisy chain; or, knocking off with my stick the tall heavy-headed dahlias and sunflowers, hunted over the beds for cucumbers and love-apples,—no one called out to me from any opened window, or dog sprang forward to bark an alarm. I could have supposed the people hidden in the houses, but the doors were unfastened; and when at last I timidly entered them, I found dead ashes white upon the hearths, and had to tread a tiptoe, as if walking down the aisle of a country church, to avoid rousing irreverent echoes from the naked floors.

On the outskirts of the town was the city grave-yard. But there was no record of Plague there, nor did it in anywise differ much from other Protestant American cemeteries. Some of the mounds were not long sodded; some of the stones were newly set, their dates recent, and their black inscriptions glossy in the mason's hardly dried lettering ink. Beyond the grave-yard, out in the fields, I saw, in one spot hard-by where the fruited boughs of a young orchard had been roughly torn down, the still smouldering embers of a barbecue fire, that had been constructed of rails from the fencing round it. It was the latest sign of life there. Fields upon fields of heavy-headed yellow grain lay rotting ungathered upon the ground. No one was at hand to take in their rich harvest. As far as

the eye could reach, they stretched away—they, sleeping too in the hazy air of Autumn.

Only two portions of the city seemed to suggest the import of this mysterious solitude. On the southern suburb, the houses looking out upon the country showed, by their splintered woodwork and walls battered to the foundation, that they had lately been the mark of a destructive cannonade. And in and around the splendid Temple, which had been the chief object of my admiration, armed men were barracked, surrounded by their stacks of musketry and pieces of heavy ordnance. These challenged me to render an account of myself, and why I had had the temerity to cross the water without a written permit from a leader of their band.

Though these men were generally more or less under the influence of ardent spirits; after I had explained myself as a passing stranger, they seemed anxious to gain my good opinion. They told me the story of the Dead City: that it had been a notable manufacturing and commercial mart, sheltering over 20,000 persons; that they had waged war with its inhabitants for several years, and had been finally successful only a few days before my visit, in an action fought in front of the ruined suburb; after which, they had driven them forth at the point of the sword. The defence, they said, had been obstinate, but gave way on the third day's bombardment. They boasted greatly of their prowess, espe-

cially in this Battle, as they called it; but I discovered they were not of one mind as to certain of the exploits that had distinguished it; one of which, as I remember, was, that they had slain a father and his son, a boy of fifteen, not long residents of the fated city, whom they admitted to have borne a character without reproach.

They also conducted me inside the massive sculptured walls of the curious Temple, in which they said the banished inhabitants were accustomed to celebrate the mystic rites of an unhallowed worship. They particularly pointed out to me certain features of the building, which, having been the peculiar objects of a former superstitious regard, they had as matter of duty sedulously defiled and defaced. The reputed sites of certain shrines they had thus particularly noticed, and various sheltered chambers, in one of which was a deep well, constructed they believed with a dreadful design. Beside these, they led me to see a large and deep chiselled marble vase or basin, supported upon twelve oxen, also of marble, and of the size of life, of which they told some romantic stories. They said, the deluded persons, most of whom were immigrants from a great distance, believed their Deity countenanced their reception here of a baptism of regeneration, as proxies for whomsoever they held in warm affection in the countries from which they had come: That here parents "went into the water" for their lost children, children for their parents, widows for their spouses, and young persons for

their lovers: That thus the Great Vase came to be for them associated with all dear and distant memories, and was therefore the object, of all others in the building, to which they attached the greatest degree of idolatrous affection. On this account, the victors had so diligently desecrated it, as to render the apartment in which it was contained too noisome to abide in.

They permitted me also to ascend into the steeple, to see where it had been lightning-struck on the Sabbath before; and to look out, East and South, on wasted farms like those I had seen near the City, extending till they were lost in the distance. Here, in the face of the pure day, close to the scar of the Divine wrath left by the thunderbolt, were fragments of food, cruises of liquor and broken drinking vessels, with a bass drum and a steam-boat signal bell, of which I afterwards learned the use with pain.

It was after nightfall, when I was ready to cross the river on my return. The wind had freshened since the sunset; and the water beating roughly into my little boat, I headed higher up the stream than the point I had left in the morning, and landed where a faint glimmering light invited me to steer.

Here, among the dock and rushes, sheltered only by the darkness, without roof between them and the sky, I came upon a crowd of several hundred human crea-

tures, whom my movements roused from uneasy slumber upon the ground.

Passing these on my way to the light, I found it came from a tallow candle in a paper funnel-shade, such as is used by street venders of apples and pea-nuts, and which flaring and guttering away in the bleak air off the water, shone flickeringly on the emaciated features of a man in the last stage of a bilious remittent fever. They had done their best for him. Over his head was something like a tent, made of a sheet or two, and he rested on a but partially ripped open old straw mattress, with a hair sofa cushion under his head for a pillow. His gaping jaw and glazing eye told how short a time he would monopolize these luxuries; though a seemingly bewildered and excited person, who might have been his wife, seemed to find hope in occasionally forcing him to swallow awkwardly measured sips of the tepid river water from a burned and battered bitter smelling tin coffee-pot. Those who knew better had furnished the apothecary he needed—a toothless old bald-head, whose manner had the repulsive dullness of a familiar with death scenes. He, so long as I remained, mumbled in his patient's ear a monotonous and melancholy prayer, between the pauses of which I heard the hiccup and sobbing of two little girls, who were sitting up on a piece of drift wood outside.

Dreadful, indeed, was the suffering of these forsaken beings. Cowed and cramped by cold and sunburn, al-

ternating as each weary day and night dragged on, they were, almost all of them, the crippled victims of disease. They were there because they had no homes, nor hospital nor poor-house nor friends to offer them any. They could not satisfy the feeble cravings of their sick: they had not bread to quiet the fractious hunger cries of their children. Mothers and babes, daughters and grandparents, all of them alike, were bivouacked in tatters, wanting even covering to comfort those whom the sick shiver of fever was searching to the marrow.

These were Mormons, famishing, in Lee county, Iowa, in the fourth week of the month of September, in the year of our Lord 1846. The city,—it was Nauvoo, Illinois. The Mormons were the owners of that city, and the smiling country round. And those who had stopped their ploughs, who had silenced their hammers, their axes, their shuttles and their workshop wheels; those who had put out their fires, who had eaten their food, spoiled their orchards, and trampled under foot their thousands of acres of unharvested bread; these,—were the keepers of their dwellings, the carousers in their Temple,—whose drunken riot insulted the ears of their dying.

I think it was as I turned from the wretched night-watch of which I have spoken, that I first listened to

the sounds of revel of a party of the guard within the city. Above the distant hum of the voices of many, occasionally rose distinct the loud oath-tainted exclamation, and the falsely intonated scrap of vulgar song;—but lest this requiem should go unheeded, every now and then, when their boisterous orgies strove to attain a sort of ecstatic climax, a cruel spirit of insulting frolic carried some of them up into the high belfry of the Temple steeple, and there, with the wicked childishness of inebriates, they whooped, and shrieked, and beat the drum that I had seen, and rang in charivaric unison their loud-tongued steam-boat bell.

They were, all told, not more than six hundred and forty persons who were thus lying on the river flats. But the Mormons in Nauvoo and its dependencies had been numbered the year before at over twenty thousand. Where were they? They had last been seen, carrying in mournful trains their sick and wounded, halt and blind, to disappear behind the western horizon, pursuing the phantom of another home. Hardly anything else was known of them: and people asked with curiosity, What had been their fate—what their fortunes?

I purpose making these questions the subject of my Lecture. Since the expulsion of the Mormons, to the present date, I have been intimately conversant with the details of their history. But I shall invite your

attention most particularly to an account of what happened to them during their first year in the Wilderness; because at this time more than any other, being lost to public view, they were the subjects of fable and misconception. Happily, it was during this period I myself moved with them; and earned, at dear price, as some among you are aware, my right to speak with authority of them and their character, their trials, achievements and intentions.

The party encountered by me at the river shore were the last of the Mormons that left the city. They had all of them engaged the year before, that they would vacate their homes, and seek some other place of refuge. It had been the condition of a truce between them and their assailants; and as an earnest of their good faith, the chief elders and some others of obnoxious standing, with their families, were to set out for the West in the Spring of 1846. It had been stipulated in return, that the rest of the Mormons might remain behind in the peaceful enjoyment of their Illinois abode, until their leaders, with their exploring party, could with all diligence select for them a new place of settlement beyond the Rocky Mountains, in California, or elsewhere, and until they had opportunity to dispose to the best advantage of the property which they were then to leave.

Some renewed symptoms of hostile feeling had, however, determined the pioneer party to begin their work

before the Spring. It was, of course, anticipated that this would be a perilous service; but it was regarded as a matter of self-denying duty. The ardor and emulation of many, particularly the devout and the young, were stimulated by the difficulties it involved; and the ranks of the party were therefore filled up with volunteers from among the most effective and responsible members of the sect. They began their march in midwinter; and by the beginning of February, nearly all of them were on the road, many of their wagons having crossed the Mississippi on the ice.

Under the most favoring circumstances, an expedition of this sort, undertaken at such a season of the year, could scarcely fail to be disastrous.* But the pioneer company had to set out in haste, and were very imperfectly supplied with necessaries. The cold was intense. They moved in the teeth of keen-edged northwest winds, such as sweep down the Iowa peninsula from the ice-bound regions of the timber-shaded Slave Lake and Lake of the Woods: on the Bald Prairie there, nothing above the dead grass breaks their free course over the hard rolled hills. Even along the scattered water courses, where they broke the thick ice to give their cattle drink, the annual autumn fires had left little wood of value. The party, therefore, often wanted for good camp fires, the first luxury of all travellers; but

* *Nine* children were born the first night the women camped out.

"Sugar Creek," Feb. 5.

to men insufficiently furnished with tents and other appliances of shelter, almost an essential to life. After days of fatigue, their nights were often passed in restless efforts to save themselves from freezing. Their stock of food also proved inadequate; and as their systems became impoverished, their suffering from cold increased.

Sickened with catarrhal affections, manacled by the fetters of dreadfully acute rheumatisms, some contrived for a-while to get over the shortening day's march, and drag along some others. But the sign of an impaired circulation soon began to show itself in the liability of all to be dreadfully frost-bitten. The hardiest and strongest became helplessly crippled. About the same time, the strength of their beasts of draught began to fail. The small supply of provender they could carry with them had given out. The winter-bleached prairie straw proved devoid of nourishment; and they could only keep them from starving by seeking for the *browse*, as it is called, or green bark and tender buds and branches, of the cotton-wood and other stinted growths of the hollows.

To return to Nauvoo was apparently the only escape; but this would have been to give occasion for fresh mistrust, and so to bring new trouble to those they had left there behind them. They resolved at least to hold their ground, and to advance as they might, were it only by limping through the deep snows a few slow miles a day. They found a sort of comfort in compar-

ing themselves to the Exiles of Siberia,* and sought cheerfulness in earnest prayings for the Spring,—longed for as morning by the tossing sick.

The Spring came at last. It overtook them in the Sac and Fox country, still on the naked prairie, not yet half way over the trail they were following between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. But it brought its own share of troubles with it. The months with which it opened proved nearly as trying as the worst of winter.

The snow and sleet and rain, which fell as it appeared to them without intermission, made the road over the rich prairie soil as impassable as one vast bog of heavy black mud. Sometimes they would fasten the horses and oxen of four or five wagons to one, and attempt to get ahead in this way, taking turns; but at the close of a day of hard toil for themselves and their cattle, they would find themselves a quarter or half a mile from the place they left in the morning. The heavy rains raised all the water-courses: the most trifling streams were impassable. Wood fit for bridging was often not to be had, and in such cases the only resource was to halt for the freshets to subside,—a matter in the

* One of the company having a copy of Mme. Cottin's Elizabeth, it was so sought after that some read it from the wagons by moonlight. They were materially sustained, too, by the practice of psalmody, "keeping up the Songs of Zion, and passing along Doxologies from front to rear, when the breath froze on their eyelashes."

case of the headwaters of the Chariton, for instance, of over three weeks' delay.

These were dreary waitings upon Providence. The most spirited and sturdy murmured most at their forced inactivity. And even the women, whose heroic spirits had been proof against the lowest thermometric fall, confessed their tempers fluctuated with the ceaseless variations of the barometer. They complained, too, that the health of their children suffered more. It was the fact, that the open winds of March and April brought with them more mortal sickness than the sharpest freezing weather.

The frequent burials made the hardiest sicken. On the soldier's march, it is matter of discipline, that after the rattle of musketry over his comrade's grave, he shall tramp it to the music of some careless tune in a lively quick-step. But, in the Mormon camp, the companion who lay ill and gave up the ghost within view of all, all saw as he lay stretched a corpse, and all attended to his last resting-place. It was a sorrow then, too, of itself to simple-hearted people, the deficient pomps of their imperfect style of funeral. The general hopefulness of human,—including Mormon —nature, was well illustrated by the fact, that the most provident were found unfurnished with undertaker's articles; so that bereaved affection was driven to the most melancholy makeshifts.

The best expedient generally was to cut down a log

of some eight or nine feet long, and slitting it longitudinally, strip off its dark bark in two half cylinders. These, placed around the body of the deceased, and bound firmly together with withes made of the alburnum, formed a rough sort of tubular coffin, which surviving relatives and friends, with a little show of black crape, could follow with its enclosure to the hole, or bit of ditch, dug to receive it in the wet ground of the prairie. They grieved to lower it down so poorly clad, and in such an unheeded grave. It was hard,—was it right?—thus hurriedly to plunge it in one of the undistinguishable waves of the great land sea, and leave it behind them there, under the cold north rain, abandoned, to be forgotten? They had no tombstones, nor could they find rock to pile the monumental cairn. So, when they had filled up the grave, and over it prayed a Miserere prayer, and tried to sing a hopeful psalm, their last office was to seek out landmarks, or call in the surveyor to help them determine the bearings of valley bends, headlands, or forks and angles of constant streams, by which its position should in the future be remembered and recognized. The name of the beloved person, his age, the date of his death, and these marks were all registered with care. His party was then ready to move on. Such graves mark all the line of the first years of Mormon travel,—dispiriting milestones to failing stragglers in the rear.

It is an error to estimate largely the number of Mor-

mons dead of starvation, strictly speaking. Want developed disease, and made them sink under fatigue, and maladies that would otherwise have proved trifling. But only those died of it outright, who fell in out-of-the-way places that the hand of brotherhood could not reach. Among the rest no such thing as plenty was known, while any went an hungered. If but a part of a group was supplied with provision, the only result was that the whole went on the half or quarter ration, according to the sufficiency that there was among them: and this so ungrudgingly and contentedly, that till some crisis of trial to their strength, they were themselves unaware that their health was sinking, and their vital force impaired.

Hale young men gave up their own provided food and shelter to the old and helpless, and walked their way back to parts of the frontier states, chiefly Missouri and Iowa, where they were not recognized, and hired themselves out for wages, to purchase more. Others were sent there, to exchange for meal and flour, or wheat and corn, the table and bed furniture, and other last resources of personal property which a few had still retained.

In a kindred spirit of fraternal forecast, others laid out great farms in the wilds, and planted in them the grain saved for their own bread; that there might be harvests for those who should follow them. Two of these, in the Sac and Fox country and beyond it,

Garden Grove and Mount Pisgah, included within their fences about two miles of land a-piece, carefully planted in grain, with a hamlet of comfortable log cabins in the neighbourhood of each.

Through all this the pioneers found redeeming comfort in the thought, that their own suffering was the price of immunity to their friends at home. But the arrival of spring proved this a delusion. Before the warm weather had made the earth dry enough for easy travel, messengers came in from Nauvoo to overtake the party with fear-exaggerated tales of outrage, and to urge the chief men to hurry back to the city that they might give counsel and assistance there. The enemy had only waited till the emigrants were supposed to be gone on their road too far to return to interfere with them, and then renewed their aggressions.

The Mormons outside Nauvoo were indeed hard pressed; but inside the city they maintained themselves very well for two or three months longer.

Strange to say, the chief part of this respite was devoted to completing the structure of their quaintly devised but beautiful Temple. Since the dispersion of Jewry, probably, history affords us no parallel to the attachment of the Mormons for this edifice. Every architectural element, every most fantastic emblem it embodied, was associated, for them, with some cherished feature of their religion. Its erection had been enjoined upon them as a most sacred duty: they were proud of

the honor it conferred upon their city, when it grew up in its splendour to become the chief object of the admiration of strangers upon the Upper Mississippi. Besides, they had built it as a labor of love; they could count up to half a million the value of their tithings and free-will offerings laid upon it. Hardly a Mormon woman had not given up to it some trinket or pin-money: the poorest Mormon man had at least served the tenth part of his year on its walls; and the coarsest artisan could turn to it with something of the ennobling attachment of an artist for his fair creation. Therefore, though their enemies drove on them ruthlessly, they succeeded in parrying the last sword-thrust, till they had completed even the gilding of the angel and trumpet on the summit of its lofty spire. As a closing work, they placed on the entablature of the front, like a baptismal mark on the forehead,

THE HOUSE OF THE LORD:
BUILT BY THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.
HOLINESS TO THE LORD!

Then, at high noon, under the bright sunshine of May, the next only after its completion, they consecrated it to divine service. There was a carefully studied ceremonial for the occasion. It was said the high elders of the sect travelled furtively from the Camp of Israel in the Wilderness; and throwing off ingenious

disguises, appeared in their own robes of holy office, to give it splendour.

For that one day the Temple stood resplendent in all its typical glories of sun, moon and stars, and other abounding figured and lettered signs, hieroglyphs and symbols: but that day only. The sacred rites of consecration ended, the work of removing the sacrosancta proceeded with the rapidity of magic. It went on through the night; and when the morning of the next day dawned, all the ornaments and furniture, everything that could provoke a sneer, had been carried off; and except some fixtures that would not bear removal, the building was dismantled to the bare walls.

It was this day saw the departure of the last elders, and the largest band that moved in one company together. The people of Iowa have told me, that from morning to night they passed westward like an endless procession. They did not seem greatly out of heart, they said; but, at the top of every hill before they disappeared, were to be seen looking back, like banished Moors, on their abandoned homes, and the far-seen Temple and its glittering spire.

After this consecration, which was construed to indicate an insincerity on the part of the Mormons as to their stipulated departure, or at least a hope of return, their foes set upon them with renewed bitterness. As many fled as were at all prepared; but by the very fact of their so decreasing the already diminished forces of

the city's defenders, they encouraged the enemy to greater boldness. It soon became apparent that nothing short of an immediate emigration could save the remnant.

From this time onward the energies of those already on the road were engrossed by the duty of providing for the fugitives who came crowding in after them. At a last general meeting of the sect in Nauvoo, there had been passed an unanimous resolve that they would sustain one another, whatever their circumstances, upon the march; and this, though made in view of no such appalling exigency, they now with one accord set themselves together to carry out.

Here begins the touching period of Mormon history; on which but that it is for me a hackneyed subject, I should be glad to dwell, were it only for the proof it has afforded of the strictly material value to communities of an active common faith, and its happy illustrations of the power of the spirit of Christian fraternity to relieve the deepest of human suffering. I may assume that it has already fully claimed the public sympathy.

Delayed thus by their own wants, and by their exertions to provide for the wants of others, it was not till the month of June that the advance of the emigrant companies arrived at the Missouri.

This body I remember I had to join there, ascending the river for the purpose from Fort Leavenworth, which was at that time our frontier post. The fort was the interesting rendezvous of the Army of the West, and

the head-quarters of its gallant chief, Stephen F. Kearney, whose guest and friend I account it my honor to have been. Many as were the reports daily received at the garrison from all portions of the Indian territory, it was a significant fact, how little authentic intelligence was to be obtained concerning the Mormons. Even the region in which they were to be sought after, was a question not attempted to be designated with accuracy, except by what are very well called in the West,—Mormon stories; none of which bore any sifting. One of these averred, that a party of Mormons in spangled crimson robes of office, headed by one in black velvet and silver, had been teaching a Jewish pow-wow to the medicine men of the Sauks and Foxes. Another averred that they were going about in buffalo robe short frocks, imitative of the costume of Saint John, preaching baptism and the instance of the kingdom of heaven among the Ioways. To believe one report, ammunition and whiskey had been received by Indian braves at the hands of an elder with a flowing white beard, who spoke Indian, he alleged, because he had the gift of tongues:—this, as far North as the country of the Yanketon Sioux. According to another yet, which professed to be derived officially from at least one Indian sub-agent, the Mormons had distributed the scarlet uniforms of H. B. M.'s servants among the Pottawatamies, and had carried into their country twelve pieces of brass cannon, which were counted by a traveller as

they were rafted across the East Fork of Grand River, one of the northern tributaries of the Missouri. The narrators of these pleasant stories were at variance as to the position of the Mormons, by a couple of hundred leagues; but they harmonized in the warning, that to seek certain of the leading camps would be to meet the treatment of a spy.

Almost at the outset of my journey from Fort Leavenworth, while yet upon the edge of the Indian border, I had the good fortune to fall in with a couple of thin-necked sallow persons, in patchwork pantaloons, conducting Northward wagon-loads of Indian corn, which they had obtained, according to their own account, in barter from a squatter for some silver spoons and a feather bed. Their character was disclosed by their eager request of a bite from my wallet; in default of which, after a somewhat superfluous scriptural grace, they made an imperfect lunch before me off the softer of their corn ears, eating the grains as horses do, from the cob. I took their advice to follow up the Missouri; somewhere not far from which, in the Pottawatamie country, they were sure I would encounter one of their advancing companies.

I had bad weather on the road. Excessive heats, varied only by repeated drenching thunder squalls, knocked up my horse, my only travelling companion; and otherwise added to the ordinary hardships of a kind of life to which I was as yet little accustomed. I

suffered a sense of discomfort, therefore, amounting to physical nostalgia, and was, in fact, wearied to death of the staring silence of the prairie, before I came upon the objects of my search.

They were collected a little distance above the Pottawatamie Agency. The hills of the "High Prairie" crowding in upon the river at this point, and overhanging it, appear of an unusual and commanding elevation. They are called the Council Bluffs; a name given them with another meaning, but well illustrated by the picturesque Congress of their high and mighty summits. To the south of them, a rich alluvial flat of considerable width follows down the Missouri, some eight miles, to where it is lost from view at a turn, which forms the site of the Indian town of Point aux Poules. Across the river from this spot the hills recur again, but are skirted at their base by as much low ground as suffices for a landing.

This landing, and the large flat or bottom on the east side of the river, were crowded with covered carts and wagons; and each one of the Council Bluff hills opposite was crowned with its own great camp, gay with bright white canvas, and alive with the busy stir of swarming occupants. In the clear blue morning air, the smoke streamed up from more than a thousand cooking fires. Countless roads and by-paths checkered all manner of geometric figures on the hillsides. Herd boys were dozing upon the slopes;

sheep and horses, cows and oxen, were feeding around them, and other herds in the luxuriant meadow of the then swollen river. From a single point I counted four thousand head of cattle in view at one time. As I approached the camps, it seemed to me the children there were to prove still more numerous. Along a little creek I had to cross were women in greater force than blanchisseuses upon the Seine, washing and rinsing all manner of white muslins, red flannels and parti-colored calicoes, and hanging them to bleach upon a greater area of grass and bushes than we can display in all our Washington Square.

Hastening by these, I saluted a group of noisy boys, whose purely vernacular cries had for me an invincible home-savoring attraction. It was one of them, a bright faced lad, who, hurrying on his jacket and trowsers, fresh from bathing in the creek, first assured me I was at my right destination. He was a mere child; but he told me of his own accord where I had best go seek my welcome, and took my horse's bridle to help me pass a morass, the bridge over which he alleged to be unsafe.

There was something joyous for me in my free rambles about this vast body of pilgrims. I could range the wild country wherever I listed, under safeguard of their moving host. Not only in the main camps was all stir and life, but in every direction, it seemed to me, I could follow 'Mormon Roads,' and find them beaten

hard and even dusty by the tread and wear of the cattle and vehicles of emigrants laboring over them. By day, I would overtake and pass, one after another, what amounted to an army train of them; and at night, if I encamped at the places where the timber and running water were found together, I was almost sure to be within call of some camp or other, or at least within sight of its watch-fires. Wherever I was compelled to tarry, I was certain to find shelter and hospitality, scant, indeed, but never stinted, and always honest and kind. After a recent unavoidable association with the border inhabitants of Western Missouri and Iowa, the vile scum which our own society, to apply the words of an admirable gentleman and eminent divine,* "like the great ocean washes upon its frontier shores," I can scarcely describe the gratification I felt in associating again with persons who were almost all of Eastern American origin,—persons of refined and cleanly habits and decent language,—and in observing their peculiar and interesting mode of life;—while every day seemed to bring with it its own especial incident, fruitful in the illustration of habits and character.

It was during the period of which I have just spoken, that the Mormon battalion of 520 men was recruited and marched for the Pacific Coast.

At the commencement of the Mexican war, the President considered it desirable to march a body of relia-

* Rev. Dr. Morton, of Philadelphia.

ble infantry to California at as early a period as practicable, and the known hardihood and habits of discipline of the Mormons were supposed peculiarly to fit them for this service. As California was supposed also to be their ultimate destination, the long march might cost them less than other citizens. They were accordingly invited to furnish a battalion of volunteers early in the month of July.

The call could hardly have been more inconveniently timed. The young, and those who could best have been spared, were then away from the main body, either with pioneer companies in the van, or, their faith unannounced, seeking work and food about the northwestern settlements, to support them till the return of the season for commencing emigration. The force was therefore to be recruited from among fathers of families, and others whose presence it was most desirable to retain.

There were some, too, who could not view the invitation without jealousy. They had twice been persuaded by (State) Government authorities in Illinois and Missouri, to give up their arms on some special appeals to their patriotic confidence, and had then been left to the malice of their enemies. And now they were asked, in the midst of the Indian country, to surrender over five hundred of their best men for a war march of thousands of miles to California, without the

hope of return till after the conquest of that country. Could they view such a proposition with favor?

But the feeling of country triumphed. The Union had never wronged them: "You shall have your battalion at once, if it has to be a class of our elders," said one, himself a ruling elder. A central 'mass meeting' for Council, some harangues at the more remotely scattered camps, an American flag brought out from the storehouse of things rescued, and hoisted to the top of a tree mast—and, in three days, the force was reported, mustered, organized and ready to march.

There was no sentimental affectation at their leave-taking. The afternoon before was appropriated to a farewell ball; and a more merry dancing rout I have never seen, though the company went without refreshments, and their ball-room was of the most primitive. It was the custom, whenever the larger camps rested for a few days together, to make great arbors, or Boweries, as they called them, of poles and brush and wattling, as places of shelter for their meetings of devotion or conference. In one of these, where the ground had been trodden firm and hard by the worshippers of the popular Father Taylor's precinct, was gathered now the mirth and beauty of the Mormon Israel.

If anything told the Mormons had been bred to other lives, it was the appearance of the women, as they assembled here. Before their flight, they had sold their watches and trinkets as the most available resource for

raising ready money; and hence, like their partners, who wore waistcoats cut with useless watch pockets, they, although their ears were pierced and bore the loop-marks of rejected pendants, were without ear-rings, finger-rings, chains or brooches. Except such ornaments, however, they lacked nothing most becoming the attire of decorous maidens. The neatly darned white stocking, and clean bright petticoat, the artistically clear-starched collar and chemisette, the something faded, only because too well washed, lawn or gingham gown, that fitted modishly to the waist of its pretty wearer,—these, if any of them spoke of poverty, spoke of a poverty that had known its better days.

With the rest, attended the elders of the church within call, including nearly all the chiefs of the High Council, with their wives and children. They, the gravest and most trouble-worn, seemed the most anxious of any to be first to throw off the burden of heavy thoughts. Their leading off the dancing in a great double cotillion was the signal bade the festivity commence. To the canto of debonnair violins, the cheer of horns, the jingle of sleigh-bells, and the jovial snoring of the tambourine, they did dance! None of your minuets or other mortuary processions of gentles in etiquette, tight shoes, and pinching gloves, but the spirited and scientific displays of our venerated and merry grandparents, who were not above following the fiddle to the Fox-Chase Inn or Gardens of Gray's Ferry.

French fours, Copenhagen jigs Virginia reels, and the like forgotten figures, executed with the spirit of people too happy to be slow, or bashful or constrained. Light hearts, lithe figures and light feet, had it their own way from an early hour till after the sun had dipped behind the sharp sky line of the Omaha hills. Silence was then called, and a well cultivated mezzo-soprano voice, belonging to a young lady with fair face and dark eyes, gave with quartette accompaniment a little song, the notes of which I have been unsuccessful in repeated efforts to obtain since,—a version of the text, touching to all earthly wanderers :

> "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept."
> "We wept when we remembered Zion."

There was danger of some expression of feeling when the song was over, for it had begun to draw tears; but breaking the quiet with his hard voice, an Elder asked the blessing of Heaven on all who, with purity of heart and brotherhood of spirit, had mingled in that society, and then, all dispersed, hastening to cover from the falling dews. All, I remember, but some splendid Indians, who in cardinal scarlet blankets and feathered leggings, had been making foreground figures for the dancing rings, like those in Mr. West's picture of our Philadelphia Treaty, and staring their inability to comprehend the wonderful performances. These loitered to the last, as if unwilling to seek their abject homes.

Well as I knew the peculiar fondness of the Mormons for music, their orchestra in service on this occasion astonished me by its numbers and fine drill. The story was, that an eloquent Mormon missionary had converted its members in a body at an English town, a stronghold of the sect, and that they took up their trumpets, trombones, drums and hautboys together, and followed him to America.

When the refugees from Nauvoo were hastening to part with their table-ware, jewelry, and almost every other fragment of metal wealth they possessed that was not iron, they had never a thought of giving up the instruments of this favorite band. And when the battalion was enlisted, though high inducements were offered some of the performers to accompany it, they all refused. Their fortunes went with the Camp of the Tabernacle. They had led the Farewell Service in the Nauvoo Temple. Their office now was to guide the monster choruses and Sunday hymns; and like the trumpets of silver made of a whole piece 'for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps,' to knoll the people in to church. Some of their wind instruments, indeed, were uncommonly full and pure toned, and in that clear dry air could be heard to a great distance. It had the strangest effect in the world, to listen to their sweet music winding over the uninhabited country. Something in the style of a Moravian death-tune blown at day-break, but altogether

unique. It might be when you were hunting a ford over the Great Platte, the dreariest of all wild rivers, perplexed among the far-reaching sand bars and curlew shallows of its shifting bed:—the wind rising would bring you the first faint thought of a melody; and, as you listened, borne down upon the gust that swept past you a cloud of the dry sifted sands, you recognized it—perhaps a home-loved theme of Henry Proch or Mendelssohn. Mendelssohn Bartholdy, away there in the Indian Marches!

The battalion gone, the host again moved on. The tents which had gathered on the hill summits, like white birds hesitating to venture on the long flight over the river, were struck one after another, and the dwellers in them and their wagons and their cattle hastened down to cross it at a ferry in the valley, which they made ply night and day. A little beyond the landing they formed their companies, and made their preparations for the last and longest stage of their journey. It was a more serious matter to cross the mountains then than now, that the thirst of our people for the gold of California has made the region between them and their desire such literally trodden ground.

Thanks to this wonderful movement, I may dismiss an effort to describe the incidents of emigrant life upon the Plains, presuming that you have been made more than familiar with them already, by the many repeated descriptions of which they have been the subject. The

desert march, the ford, the quicksand, the Indian battle, the bison chase, the prairie fire :—the adventures of the Mormons comprised every variety of these varieties; but I could not hope to invest them with the interest of novelty. The character of their every-day life, its routine and conduct, alone offered any exclusive or marked peculiarity. Their romantic devotional observances, and their admirable concert of purpose and action, met the eye at once. After these, the stranger was most struck perhaps by the strict order of march, the unconfused closing up to meet attack, the skilful securing of the cattle upon the halt, the system with which the watches were set at night to guard them and the lines of *corral*—with other similar circumstances indicative of the maintenance of a high state of discipline. Every ten of their wagons was under the care of a captain. This captain of ten, as they termed him, obeyed a captain of fifty; who, in turn, obeyed his captain of a hundred, or directly a member of what they call the High Council of the Church. All these were responsible and determined men, approved of by the people for their courage, discretion and experience. So well recognized were the results of this organization, that bands of hostile Indians have passed by comparative small parties of Mormons, to attack much larger, but less compact bodies of other emigrants.

The most striking feature, however, of the Mormon emigration, was undoubtedly their formation of the

Tabernacle Camps and temporary Stakes, or Settlements, which renewed in the sleeping solitudes everywhere along their road, the cheering signs of intelligent and hopeful life.

I will make this remark plainer by describing to you one of these camps, with the daily routine of its inhabitants. I select at random, for my purpose, a large camp upon the delta betwen the Nebraska and Missouri, in the territory disputed between the Omaha, and Otto and Missouria Indians. It remained pitched here for nearly two months, during which period I resided in it.

It was situated near the Petit Papillon, or Little Butterfly River, and upon some finely rounded hills that encircle a favorite cool spring. On each of these a square was marked out; and the wagons as they arrived took their positions along its four sides in double rows, so as to leave a roomy street or passage-way between them. The tents were disposed also in rows, at intervals between the wagons. The cattle were folded in high-fenced yards outside. The quadrangle inside was left vacant for the sake of ventilation, and the streets, covered in with leafy arbor work and kept scrupulously clean, formed a shaded cloister walk. This was the place of exercise for slowly recovering invalids, the day-home of the infants, and the evening promenade of all.

From the first formation of the camp, all its inhabitants were constantly and laboriously occupied. Many

of them were highly educated mechanics, and seemed only to need a day's anticipated rest to engage them at the forge, loom, or turning lathe, upon some needed *chore* of work. A Mormon gunsmith is the inventor of the excellent repeating rifle, that loads by slides instead of cylinders; and one of the neatest finished fire-arms I have ever seen was of this kind, wrought from scraps of old iron, and inlaid with the silver of a couple of half dollars, under a hot July sun, in a spot where the average height of the grass was above the workman's shoulders. I have seen a cobbler, after the halt of his party on the march, hunting along the river bank for a lap-stone in the twilight, that he might finish a famous boot sole by the camp fire; and I have had a piece of cloth, the wool of which was sheared, and dyed, and spun, and woven, during a progress of over three hundred miles.

Their more interesting occupations, however, were those growing out of their peculiar circumstances and position. The chiefs were seldom without some curious affair on hand to settle with the restless Indians; while the immense labor and responsibility of the conduct of their unwieldy moving army, and the commissariat of its hundreds of famishing poor, also devolved upon them. They had good men they called Bishops, whose special office it was to look up the cases of extremest suffering: and their relief parties were out night and day to scour over every trail.

At this time, say two months before the final expulsion from Nauvoo, there were already, along three hundred miles of the road between that city and our Papillon Camp, over two thousand emigrating wagons, besides a large number of nondescript turn-outs, the motley make-shifts of poverty; from the unsuitably heavy cart that lumbered on mysteriously with its sick driver hidden under its counterpane cover, to the crazy two-wheeled trundle, such as our own poor employ for the conveyance of their slop barrels, this pulled along it may be by a little dry dugged heifer, and rigged up only to drag some such light weight as a baby, a sack of meal, or a pack of clothes and bedding.

Some of them were in distress from losses upon the way. A strong trait of the Mormons was their kindness to their brute dependents, and particularly to their beasts of draught. They gave them the holiday of the Sabbath whenever it came round: I believe they would have washed them with old wine, after the example of the emigrant Carthaginians, had they had any. Still, in the Slave-coast heats, under which the animals had to move, they sometimes foundered. Sometimes, too, they strayed off in the night, or were mired in morasses;—or oftener were stolen by Indians, who found market covert for such plunder among the horse-thief whites of the frontier. But the great mass of these pilgrims of the desert was made up of poor

folks, who had fled in destitution from Nauvoo, and been refused a resting place by the people of Iowa.

It is difficult fully to understand the state of helplessness in which some of these would arrive, after accomplishing a journey of such extent, under circumstances of so much privation and peril. The fact was, they seemed to believe that all their trouble would be at an end if they could only come up with their comrades at the Great Camps. For this they calculated their resources, among which their power of endurance was by much the largest and most reliable item, and they were not disappointed if they arrived with these utterly exhausted.

I remember a signal instance of this at the Papillon Camp.

It was that of a joyous hearted clever fellow, whose songs and fiddle tunes were the life and delight of Nauvoo in its merry days. I forget his story, and how exactly, it fell about, that after a Mormon's full peck of troubles, he started after us with his wife and little ones from some 'lying down place' in the Indian country, where he had contended with an attack of a serious malady. He was just convalescent, and the fatigue of marching on foot again with a child on his back, speedily brought on a relapse. But his anxiety to reach a place where he could expect to meet friends with shelter and food, was such that he only pressed on the harder. Probably for more than a week

of the dog-star weather, he laboured on under a high fever, walking every day till he was entirely exhausted.

His limbs failed him then; but his courage holding out, he got into his covered cart on top of its freight of baggage, and made them drive him on, while he lay down. They could hardly believe how ill he was, he talked on so cheerfully—"I'm nothing on earth ailing but home-sick: I'm cured the very minute I get to camp and see the brethren."

Not being able thus to watch his course, he lost his way, and had to regain it through a wretched tract of Low Meadow Prairie, where there were no trees to break the noon, nor water but what was ague-sweet or brackish. By the time he got back to the trail of the High Prairie, he was, in his own phrase, 'pretty far gone.' Yet he was resolute in his purpose as ever, and to a party he fell in with, avowed his intention to be cured at the camp, 'and no where else.' He even jested with them, comparing his jolting couch to a summer cot in a white washed cockloft. "But I'll make them take me down," he said, "and give me a dip in the river when I get there. All I care for is to see the brethren."

His determined bearing rallied the spirit of his travelling household, and they kept on their way till he was within a few hours journey of the camp. He entered on his last day's journey with the energy of increased hope.

I remember that day well. For in the evening I

mounted a tired horse to go a short errand, and in mere pity had to turn back before I had walked him a couple of hundred yards. Nothing seemed to draw life from the languid air but the clouds of gnats and stinging midges; and long after sundown it was so hot that the sheep lay on their stomachs panting, and the cattle strove to lap wind like hard fagged hunting dogs. In camp, I had spent the day in watching the invalids and the rest hunting the shade under the wagon bodies, and veering about them, like the shadows round the sun-dial. I know I thought myself wretched enough, to be of their company.

Poor Merryman had all that heat to bear, with the mere pretence of an awning to screen out the sun from his close muslin cockloft.

He did not fail till somewhere hard upon noon. He then began to grow restless to know accurately the distance travelled. He made them give him water, too, much more frequently; and when they stopped for this purpose, asked a number of obscure questions. A little after this he discovered himself that a film had come over his eyes. He confessed that this was discouraging; but said with stubborn resignation, that if denied to *see* the brethren, he still should *hear* the sound of their voices.

After this, which was when he was hardly three miles from our camp, he lay very quiet, as if husbanding his strength; but when he had made, as is thought, a full mile further, being interrogated by the woman that

was driving, whether she should stop, he answered her, as she avers, "No, no; go on!"

The anecdote ends badly. They brought him in dead, I think about five o'clock of the afternoon. He had on his clean clothes; as he had dressed himself in the morning, looking forward to his arrival.

Beside the common duty of guiding and assisting these unfortunates, the companies in the van united in providing the highway for the entire body of emigrants. The Mormons have laid out for themselves a road through the Indian Territory, over four hundred leagues in length, with substantial, well-built bridges, fit for the passage of heavy artillery, over all the streams, except a few great rivers where they have established permanent ferries. The nearest unfinished bridging to the Papillon Camp, was that of the Corne à Cerf, or Elkhorn, a tributary of the Platte, distant may be a couple of hours' march. Here, in what seemed to be an incredibly short space of time, there rose the seven great piers and abutments of a bridge, such as might challenge honors for the entire public spirited population of lower Virginia. The party detailed to the task worked in the broiling sun, in water beyond depth, and up to their necks, as if engaged in the perpetration of some pointed and delightful practical joke. The chief sport lay in floating along with the logs, cut from the overhanging timber up the stream, guiding them till they reached their destination, and then plunging them under

water in the precise spot where they were to be secured. This the laughing engineers would execute with the agility of happy diving ducks.

Our nearest ferry was that over the Missouri. Nearly opposite Pull Point, or Point aux Poules, a trading post of the American Fur Company, and village of the Pottawatamies, they had gained a favorable crossing by making a deep cut for the road through the steep right bank. And here, without intermission, their flat-bottomed scows plied, crowded with the wagons and cows and sheep and children and furniture of the emigrants, who, in waiting their turn, made the woods around smoke with their crowding camp fires. But no such good fortune as a gratuitous passage awaited the heavy cattle, of whom, with the others, no less than 30,000 were at this time on their way westward: these were made to earn it by swimming.

A heavy freshet had at this time swollen the river to a width, as I should judge, of something like a mile and a half, and dashed past its fierce current, rushing, gurgling, and eddying, as if thrown from a mill race, or *scriptural* fountain of the deep. Its aspect did not invite the oxen to their duty, and the labor was to force them to it. They were gathered in little troops upon the shore, and driven forward till they lost their footing. As they turned their heads to return, they encountered the combined opposition of a clamorous crowd of bystanders, vieing with each other in the pungent admin-

istration of inhospitable affront. Then rose their hubbub; their geeing and woing and hawing, their yelling and yelping and screaming, their hooting and hissing and pelting. The rearmost steers would hesitate to brave such a rebuff; halting, they would impede the return of the outermost; they all would waver; wavering for a moment, the current would sweep them together downward. At this juncture, a fearless youngster, climbing upon some brave bull in the front rank, would urge him boldly forth into the stream: the rest then surely followed; a few moments saw them struggling in mid current; a few more, and they were safely landed on the opposite shore. The driver's was the sought after post of honor here; and sometimes, when repeated failures have urged them to emulation, I have seen the youths, in stepping from back to back of the struggling monsters, or swimming in among their battling hoofs, display feats of address and hardihood, that would have made Franconi's or the Madrid bull-ring vibrate with bravos of applause. But in the hours after hours that I have watched this sport at the ferry side, I never heard an oath or the language of quarrel, or knew it provoke the least sign of ill feeling.

After the sorrowful word was given out to halt, and make preparations for winter, a chief labor became the making hay; and with every day dawn brigades of mowers would take up the march to their positions in chosen meadows—a prettier sight than a charge of

cavalry—as they laid their swarths, whole companies of scythes abreast. Before this time the manliest, as well as most general daily labor, was the herding of the cattle; the only wealth of the Mormons, and more and more cherished by them, with the increasing pastoral character of their lives. A camp could not be pitched in any spot without soon exhausting the freshness of the pasture around it; and it became an ever recurring task to guide the cattle, in unbroken droves, to the nearest places where it was still fresh and fattening. Sometimes it was necessary to go farther, to distant ranges which were known as feeding grounds of the Buffalo. About these there were sure to prowl parties of thievish Indians; and each drove therefore had its escort of mounted men and boys, who learned self-reliance and heroism while on night guard alone, among the silent hills. But generally the cattle were driven from the camp at the dawn of morning, and brought back thousands together in the evening, to be picketed in the great corral or enclosure, where beeves, bulls, cows, and oxen, with the horses, mules, hogs, calves, sheep and human beings, could all look together upon the red watch fires, with the feeling of security, when aroused by the Indian stampede, or the howlings of the prairie wolves at moonrise.

When they set about building their winter houses, too, the Mormons went into quite considerable timbering operations, and performed desperate feats of carpentry.

They did not come, ornamental gentlemen or raw apprentices, to extemporise new versions of Robinson Crusoe. It was a comfort to notice the readiness with which they turned their hands to wood craft; some of them, though I believe these had generally been bred carpenters, wheelwrights, or more particularly boat builders, quite outdoing the most notable *voyageurs* in the use of the axe. One of these would fell a tree, strip off its bark, cut and split up the trunk in piles of plank, scantling, or shingles; make posts, and pins, and pales—everything wanted almost, of the branches; and treat his toil from first to last with more sportive flourish than a school-boy whittling his shingle.

Inside the camp, the chief labors were assigned to the women. From the moment, when after the halt, the lines had been laid, the spring wells dug out, and the ovens and fire-places built, though the men still assumed to set the guards and enforce the regulations of Police, the Empire of the Tented Town was with the better sex. They were the chief comforters of the severest sufferers, the kind nurses who gave them in their sickness, those dear attentions, with which pauperism is hardly poor, and which the greatest wealth often fails to buy. And they were a nation of wonderful managers. They could hardly be called housewives in etymological strictness, but it was plain that they had once been such, and most distinguished ones. Their art availed them in their changed affairs. With almost their en-

tire culinary material limited to the milk of their cows, some store of meal or flour, and a very few condiments, they brought their thousand and one receipts into play with a success that outdid for their families, the miracle of the Hebrew widow's cruise. They learned to make butter on a march, by the dashing of the wagon, and so nicely to calculate the working of barm in the jolting heats, that as soon after the halt as an oven could be dug in the hill side and heated, their well kneaded loaf was ready for baking, and produced good leavened bread for supper. I have no doubt the appetizing zest, their humble lore succeeded in imparting to diet which was both simple and meagre, availed materially for the health as well as the comfort of the people.

But the first duty of the Mormon women was, through all change of place and fortune, to keep alive the altar fire of home. Whatever their manifold labors for the day, it was their effort to complete them against the sacred hour of evening fall. For by that time all the out-workers, scouts, ferrymen or bridgemen, road-makers, herdsmen or haymakers, had finished their tasks and come in to their rest. And before the last smoke of the supper fire curled up reddening in the glow of sunset, a hundred chimes of cattle bells announced their looked-for approach across the open hills, and the women went out to meet them at the camp

gates, and with their children in their laps sat by them at the cherished Family meal, and talked over the events of the well-spent day.

But every day closed as every day began, with an invocation of the Divine favour; without which, indeed, no Mormon seemed to dare to lay him down to rest. With the first shining of the stars, laughter and loud talking hushed, the neighbor went his way, you heard the last hymn sung, and then the thousand-voiced murmur of prayer was heard like babbling water falling down the hills.

There was no austerity, however, about the religion of Mormonism. Their fasting and penance, it is no jest to say, was altogether involuntary. They made no merit of that. They kept the Sabbath with considerable strictness: they were too close copyists of the wanderers of Israel in other respects not to have learned, like them, the value of this most admirable of the Egypto-Mosaic institutions. But the rest of the week, their religion was independent of ritual observance. They had the sort of strong stomached faith that is still found embalmed in sheltered spots of Catholic Italy and Spain, with the spirit of the believing or Dark Ages. It was altogether too strongly felt, to be dependent on intellectual ingenuity or careful caution of the ridiculous. It mixed itself up fearlessly with the common transactions of their every-day life, and only to give them liveliness and color.

If any passages of life bear better than others a double interpretation, they are the adventures of travel, and of the field. What old persons call discomforts and discouraging mishaps, are the very elements to the young and sanguine, of what they are willing to term fun. The Mormons took the young and hopeful side. They could make sport and frolic of their trials, and often turn right sharp suffering into right round laughter against themselves. I certainly heard more jests and Joe Millers while in this Papillon Camp, than I am likely to hear in all the remainder of my days.

This, too, was at a time of serious affliction. Beside the ordinary suffering from insufficient food and shelter, distressing and mortal sickness, exacerbated, if not originated by these causes, was generally prevalent.

In the camp nearest us on the West, which was that of the bridging party near the Corne, the number of its inhabitants being small enough to invite computation, I found, as early as the 31st of July, that 37 per cent. of its inhabitants were down with the Fever and a sort of strange scorbutic disease, frequently fatal, which they named the Black Canker. The camps to the East of us, which were all on the eastern side of the Missouri, were yet worse fated.

The climate of the entire upper '*Misery* Bottom,' as they term it, is, during a considerable part of Summer and Autumn singularly pestiferous. Its rich soil, which

is to a depth far beyond the reach of the plough as fat as the earth of kitchen garden, or compost-heap, is annually the force-bed of a vegetation as rank as that of the Tropics. To render its fatal fertility the greater, it is everywhere freely watered by springs and creeks and larger streams, that flow into it from both sides. In the season of drought, when the Sun enters Virgo, these dry down till they run impure as open sewers, exposing to the day foul broad flats, mere quagmires of black dirt, stretching along for miles, unvaried, except by the limbs of half buried carrion tree trunks, or by occasional yellow pools of what the children call frog spawn; all together steaming up thick vapours redolent of the savour of death.

The same is the habit of the Great River. In the beginning of August, its shores hardly could contain the millions of forest logs, and tens of billions of gallons of turbid water, that came rushing down together from its mountain head-gates. But before the month was out, the freshet had all passed by; the river diminished one half, threaded feebly southward through the centre of the Valley, and the mud of its channel, baked and creased, made a wide tile pavement between the choking crowd of reeds and sedgy grasses and wet stalked weeds, and growths of marsh meadow flowers, the garden homes at this tainted season of venom-crazy snakes, and the fresher ooze by the water's edge, which stank in the sun like a naked muscle shoal.

Then the plague raged. I have no means of ascertaining the mortality of the Indians who inhabited the Bottom. In 1845, the year previous, which was not more unhealthy, they lost one-ninth of their number in about two months. The Mormons were scourged severely. The exceeding mortality among some of them, was no doubt in the main attributable to the low state to which their systems had been brought by long continued endurance of want and hardship. It is to be remembered also, that they were the first turners up of the prairie sod, and that this of itself made them liable to the sickness of new countries. It was where their agricultural operations had been most considerable, and in situations on the left bank of the river, where the prevalent south-west winds wafted to them the miasmata of its shores, that disease was most rife.*

In some of these, the fever prevailed to such an extent that hardly any escaped it. They let their cows go unmilked. They wanted for voices to raise the Psalm of Sundays. The few who were able to keep their feet, went about among the tents and wagons with food and water, like nurses through the wards of an Infirmary. Here at one time the digging got behind hand: burials were slow; and you might see women sit in the open tents keeping the flies off their dead children, sometime after decomposition had set in.

* It is certain that there is no sickness among the present inhabitants of this region comparable to that of 1846.

In our own camp for a part of August and September, things wore an unpleasant aspect enough.* Its situation was one much praised for its comparative salubrity; but perhaps on this account, the number of cases of Fever among us was increased by the hurrying arrival from other localities, of parties in whom the virus leaven of disease was fermented by forced travel.

But I am excused sufficiently the attempt to get up for your entertainment here any circumstantial picture of horrors, by the fact, that at the most interesting season, I was incapacitated for nice observation by an attack of Fever—mine was what they call the Congestive—that it required the utmost use of all my faculties to recover from. I still kept my tent in the camp line; but, for as much as a month, had very small notion of what went on among my neighbors. I recollect overhearing a lamentation over some dear baby, that its mother no doubt thought the destroying angel should have been specially instructed to spare. I wish too for my own sake, I could forget, how imperfectly one day I mourned the decease of a poor saint, who by clamor rendered his vicinity troublesome. He no doubt endured great pain; for he groaned shockingly till death came to his relief. He interfered

* This camp was moved by the beginning of October to winter quarters on the river, where also, there was considerable sickness before the cold weather. I am furnished with something over 600 as the number of burials in the graveyard there.

with my own hard gained slumbers, and—I was glad when Death did relieve him.

Before my attack, I was fond of conversing with an amiable old man, I think English born, who having then recently buried his only daughter and grandson, used to be seen sitting out before his tent, resting his sorrowful forehead on his hands, joined over a smooth white oak staff. I missed him when I got about again; probably he had been my moaning neighbor.

So, too, having been much exercised in my dreams at this time, by the vision of dismal processions, such as might have been formed by the union in line of all the forlornest and ugliest of the struggling fugitives from Nauvoo, I happen to recal as I write, that I had some knowledge somewhere of one of our new comers, for whom the nightmare revived and repeated without intermission the torment of his trying journey. As he lay, feeding life with long drawn breaths, he muttered: "Where's next water? Team—give out! Hot, hot—God, it's hot: Stop the wagon—stop the wagon—stop, stop the wagon!" They woke him;—to his own content—but I believe returning sleep ever renewed his distressing visions, till the sounder slumber came on from which no earthly hand or voice could rouse him; into which I hope he did not carry them.

In a half dreamy way, I remember, or I think I remember, a crowd of phantoms like these. I recal but one fact, however, going far in proof of a considera-

ble mortality. Earlier in the season, while going westward with the intention of passing the Rocky Mountains that summer, I had opened with the assistance of Mormon spades and shovels, a large mound on a commanding elevation, the tomb of a warrior of the ancient race; and continuing on my way, had left a deep trench excavated entirely through it. Returning fever-struck to the Papillon Camp, I found it planted close by this spot. It was just forming as I arrived; the first wagon, if I mistake not, having but a day or two before halted into place. My first airing upon my convalesence took me to the mound, which, probably to save digging, had been re-adapted to its original purpose. In this brief interval, they had filled the trench with bodies, and furrowed the ground with graves around it, like the ploughing of a field.

The lengthened sojourn of the Mormons in this insalubrious region, was imposed upon them by circumstances which I must now advert to.

Though the season was late, when they first crossed the Missouri, some of them moved forward with great hopefulness, full of the notion of viewing and choosing their new homes that year. But the van had only reached Grand Island and the Pawnee villages, when they were overtaken by more ill news from Nauvoo. Before the summer closed, their enemies set upon the last remnant of those who were left behind in Illinois.

They were a few lingerers, who could not be persuaded but there might yet be time for them to gather up their worldly goods before removing, some weakly mothers and their infants, a few delicate young girls, and many cripples and bereaved and sick people. These had remained under shelter, according to the Mormon statement at least, by virtue of an express covenant in their behalf. If there was such a covenant, it was broken. A vindictive war was waged upon them, from which the weakest fled in scattered parties, leaving the rest to make a reluctant and almost ludicrously unavailing defence, till the 17th day of September, when 1,625 troops entered Nauvoo, and drove all forth who had not retreated before that time.

Like the wounded birds of a flock fired into toward nightfall, they came straggling on with faltering steps, many of them without bag or baggage, beast or barrow,* all asking shelter or burial, and forcing a fresh repartition of the already divided rations of their friends. It was plain now, that every energy must be taxed to prevent the entire expedition from perishing. Further emigration for the time was out of the question, and the whole people prepared themselves for encountering another winter on the prairie.

* I knew of an orphan boy, for instance, who came on by himself at this time a foot, starting with no other provision than his trowser's pocket full of biscuit, given him from a steamboat on the Mississippi.

Happily for the main body, they found themselves at this juncture among Indians, who were amicably disposed. The lands on both sides of the Missouri in particular, were owned by the Pottawatamies and Omahas, two tribes whom unjust treatment by our United States, had the effect of rendering most auspiciously hospitable to strangers whom they regarded as persecuted like themselves.

The Pottawatamies on the eastern side, are a nation from whom the United States bought some years ago a number of hundred thousand acres of the finest lands they have ever brought into market. Whatever the bargain was, the sellers were not content with it; the people saying, their leaders were cheated, made drunk, bribed, and all manner of naughty things besides. No doubt this was quite as much of a libel on the fair fame of this particular Indian treaty, as such stories generally are; for the land to which the tribe was removed in pursuance of it, was admirably adapted to enforce habits of civilized thrift. It was smooth prairie, wanting in timber, and of course in game; and the humane and philanthropic might rejoice therefore that necessity would soon indoctrinate its inhabitants into the practice of agriculture. An impracticable few, who may have thought these advantages more than compensated by the insalubrity of their allotted resting place, fled to the extreme wilds, where they could find deer and woods, and rocks and running water, and where I

believe they are roaming to this day. The remainder, being what the political vocabulary designates on such occasions as Friendly Indians, were driven—marched is the word—galley slaves are marched thus to Barcelona and Toulon—marched from the Mississippi to the Missouri, and planted there. Discontented and unhappy, they had hardly begun to form an attachment for this new soil, when they were persuaded to exchange it for their present *Fever Patch* upon the Kaw or Kansas River. They were under this second sentence of transportation when the Mormons arrived among them.

They were pleased with the Mormons. They would have been pleased with any whites who would not cheat them, nor sell them whiskey, nor whip them for their poor gipsey habits, nor bear themselves indecently toward their women, many of whom among the Pottawatamies, especially those of nearly unmixed French descent, are singularly comely, and some of them educated. But all Indians have something like a sentiment of reverence for the insane, and admire those who sacrifice, without apparent motive, their worldly welfare to the triumph of an idea. They understand the meaning of what they call a great vow, and think it the duty of the right-minded to lighten the votary's penance under it. To this feeling they united the sympathy of fellow-sufferers for those who could talk

to them of their own Illinois, and tell the story how from it they also had been ruthlessly expelled.

Their hospitality was sincere, almost delicate. Fanny Le Clerc, the spoiled child of the great brave, Pied Riche, interpreter of the Nation, would have the pale face Miss Devine learn duetts with her to the guitar; and the daughter of substantial Joseph La Framboise, the interpreter of the United States,—she died of the fever that summer,—welcomed all the nicest young Mormon Kitties and Lizzies, and Jennies and Susans, to a coffee feast at her father's house, which was probably the best cabin in the river village. They made the Mormons at home, there and elsewhere. Upon all their lands they formally gave them leave to tarry just so long as should suit their own good pleasure.

The affair, of course, furnished material for a solemn council. Under the auspices of an officer of the United States, their chiefs were summoned, in the form befitting great occasions, to meet in the dirty yard of one Mr. P. A. Sarpy's log trading house, at their village. They came in grand toilet, moving in their fantastic attire with so much aplomb and genteel measure, that the stranger found it difficult not to believe them high born gentlemen, attending a costumed ball. Their aristocratically thin legs, of which they displayed fully the usual Indian proportion, aided this illusion. There is something too at all times very

Mock-Indian in the theatrical French millinery tie of the Pottawatamie turban; while it is next to impossible for a sober white man, at first sight, to believe that the red, green, black, blue and yellow cosmetics, with which he sees such grave personages so variously dotted, diapered, cancelled and arabesqued, are worn by them in any mood but one of the deepest and most desperate quizzing. From the time of their first squat upon the ground, to the final breaking up of the council circle, they sustained their characters with equal self-possession and address.

I will not take it upon myself to describe their order of ceremonies; indeed, I ought not, since I have never been able to view the habits and customs of our aborigines in any other light than that of a reluctant and sorrowful subject of jest. Besides, in this instance, the displays of pow wow and eloquence were both probably moderated, by the conduct of the entire transaction on temperance principles. I therefore content myself with observing, generally, that the proceedings were such as every way became the grandeur of the parties interested, and the magnitude of the interests involved. When the Red Men had indulged to satiety in tobacco smoke from their peace pipes, and in what they love still better, their peculiar metaphoric rhodomontade, which, beginning with the celestial bodies, and coursing downwards over the grandest sublunary objects, always managed to alight at last on their Grand

Father Polk, and the tenderness for him of his affectionate colored children; all the solemn funny fellows present who played the part of Chiefs, signed formal articles of convention with their unpronounceable names.

The renowned chief, Pied Riche—he was surnamed Le Clerc on account of his remarkable scholarship,—then rose, and said:

"My Mormon Brethren,

"The Pottawatamie came sad and tired into this "unhealthy Missouri Bottom, not many years back, "when he was taken from his beautiful country beyond "the Mississippi, which had abundant game and timber "and clear water everywhere. Now you are driven "away, the same, from your lodges and lands there, "and the graves of your people. So we have both "suffered. We must help one another, and the Great "Spirit will help us both. You are now free to cut "and use all the wood you may wish. You can make "all your improvements, and live on any part of our "actual land not occupied by us. Because one suffers, "and does not deserve it, is no reason he shall suffer "always: I say. We may live to see all right yet. "However, if we do not, our children will.—Bon Jour."

And thus ended the pageant. I give this speech as a morsel of real Indian. It was recited to me after the Treaty by the Pottawatamie orator in French,

which language he spoke with elegance. *Bon Jour* is the French, Indian and English Hail and Farewell of the Pottawatamies.

The other entertainers of the Mormons at this time, the Omahas, or Mahaws, are one of the minor tribes of the Grand Prairie. Their Great Father, the United States, has found it inconvenient to protect so remote a dependency against the overpowering league of the Dahcotahs or Sioux, and has judged it dangerous at the same time to allow them to protect themselves by entering into a confederation with others. Under the pressure of this paternal embarrassment and restraint, it has therefore happened most naturally, that this tribe, once a powerful and valued ally of ours, has been reduced to a band of little more than a hundred families; and these, a few years more, will entirely extinguish. When I was among them, they were so ill-fed, that their protruding high cheek bones gave them the air of a tribe of consumptives. The buffalo had left them, and no good ranges lay within several hundred miles reach. Hardly any other game found cover on their land. What little there was, they were short of ammunition to kill. Their annuity from the United States was trifling. They made next to nothing at thieving. They had planted some corn in their awkward Indian fashion, but through fear of ambush dared not venture out to harvest it. A chief resource for them, the winter pre-

vious, had been the spoliation of their neighbors, the Prairie Field Mice.

These interesting little people, more industrious and thrifty than the Mahaws, garner up in the neat little cellars of their underground homes, the small seeds or beans of the wood pea vine, which are black and hard, but quite nutritious. Gathering them one by one, a single Mouse will thus collect as much as half a pint, which before the cold weather sets in, he piles away in a dry and frost proof excavation, cleverly thatched and covered in. The Omaha animal, who, like enough, may have idled during all the season the Mouse was amassing his toilsome treasure, finds this subterranean granary to give out a certain peculiar cavernous vibration when briskly tapped upon above the ground. He wanders about, therefore, striking with a wand in hopeful spots: and as soon as he hears the hollow sound he knows, unearths the little retired capitalist along with his winter's hope. Mouse wakes up from his nap to starve, and Mahaw swallows several relishing mouthfuls.

But the Mouse has his avenger in the powerful Sioux, who wages against his wretched red brother an almost bootless, but exterminating warfare. He robs him of his poor human peltry. One of my friends was offered for sale a Sioux scalp of Omaha, "with grey hair nearly as long as a white horse's tail."

The pauper Omahas were ready to solicit as a favor the residence of white protectors among them. The Mormons harvested and stored away for them their crops of maize; with all their own poverty, they spared them food enough besides, from time to time, to save them from absolutely starving; and their entrenched camp to the north of the Omaha villages, served as a sort of breakwater between them and the destroying rush of the Sioux.

This was the Head Quarters of the Mormon Camps of Israel. The miles of rich prairie enclosed and sowed with the grain they could contrive to spare, and the houses, stacks, and cattle shelters, had the seeming of an entire county, with its people and improvements transplanted there unbroken. On a pretty plateau overlooking the river, they built more than seven hundred houses in a single town, neatly laid out with highways and byways, and fortified with breast-work, stockade and block houses. It had too its place of worship, "Tabernacle of the Congregation," and various large workshops, and mills and factories provided with water power.

They had no camp or settlement of equal size in the Pottawatamie country. There was less to apprehend here from Indian invasion; and the people scattered themselves therefore along the rivers and streams, and in the timber groves, wherever they found inviting localities for farming operations. In this way many of

them acquired what have since proved to be valuable pre-emption rights.

Upon the Pottawatamie lands, scattered through the border regions of Missouri and Iowa, in the Sauk and Fox country, a few among the Ioways, among the Poncahs in a great company upon the banks of the L'Eau qui Coule, or Running Water River, and at the Omaha winter quarters;—the Mormons sustained themselves through the heavy winter of 1846–1847. It was the severest of their trials. And if I aimed at rhetorical effect, I would be bound to offer you a minute narrative of its progress, as a sort of climax to my history. But I have, I think, given you enough of the Mormons' sorrows. We are all of us content to sympathise with a certain extent of suffering; but very few can bear the recurring yet scarcely varied narrative of another's distress without something of impatience. The world is full of griefs, and we cannot afford to expend too large a share of our charity, or even our commiseration in a single quarter.

This winter was the turning point of the Mormon fortunes. Those who lived through it were spared to witness the gradual return of better times. And they now liken it to the passing of a dreary night, since which they have watched the coming of a steadily brightening day.

Before the grass growth of 1847, a body of one hundred and forty-three picked men, with seventy

wagons, drawn by their best horses, left the Omaha quarters, under the command of the members of the High Council who had wintered there. They carried with them little but seed and farming implements, their aim being to plant spring crops at their ultimate destination. They relied on their rifles to give them food, but rarely left their road in search of game. They made long daily marches, and moved with as much rapidity as possible.

Against the season when ordinary emigration passes the Missouri, they were already through the South Pass; and a couple of short day's travel beyond it, entered upon the more arduous portion of their journey. It lay in earnest through the Rocky Mountains. They turned Fremont's Peak, Long's Peak, the Twins, and other King summits, but had to force their way over other mountains of the rugged Utah Range, sometimes following the stony bed of torrents, the head waters of some of the mightiest rivers of our continent, and sometimes literally cutting their road through heavy and ragged timber. They arrived at the grand basin of the Great Salt Lake, much exhausted, but without losing a man, and in time to plant for a partial autumn harvest.

Another party started after these pioneers, from the Omaha winter quarters, in the summer. They had 566 wagons, and carried large quantities of grain, which they were able to put in the ground before it froze.

The same season also these were joined by a part of the Battalion and other members of the Church, who came eastward from California and the Sandwich Islands. Together, they fortified themselves strongly with sunbrick wall and blockhouses, and living safely through the winter, were able to tend crops that yielded ample provision for the ensuing year.

In 1848, nearly all the remaining members of the Church left the Missouri country in a succession of powerful bands, invigorated and enriched by their abundant harvests there; and that year saw fully established their Commonwealth of the New Covenant, the future State of DESERET.

I may not undertake to describe to you in a single lecture the Geography of Deseret, and its Great Basin. Were I to consider the face of the country, its military position, or its climate and its natural productions; each head, I am confident, would claim more time than you have now to spare me. For Deseret is emphatically a New Country; new in its own characteristic features, newer still in its bringing together within its limits the most inconsistent peculiarities of other countries. I cannot aptly compare it to any. Descend from the mountains, where you have the scenery and climate of Switzerland, to seek the sky of your choice among the many climates of Italy, and you may find, welling out of the same hills, the Freezing Springs of Mexico and the Hot Springs of Iceland, both together coursing their

way to the Salt Sea of Palestine in the plain below. The pages of Malte Brun provide me with a less truthful parallel to it than those which describe the happy Valley of Rasselas or the Continent of Balnibarbi.

Let me then press on with my history, during the few minutes that remain for me.

Only two events have occurred to menace seriously the establishment at Deseret: the first threatened to destroy its crops, the other to break it up altogether.

The shores of the Salt Lake are infested by a sort of insect pest, which claims a vile resemblance to the locust of the Syrian Dead Sea. Wingless, dumpy, black, swollen-headed, with bulging eyes in cases like goggles, mounted upon legs of steel wire and clock-spring, and with a general personal appearance that justified the Mormons in comparing him to a cross of the spider on the buffalo, the Deseret cricket comes down from the mountains at a certain season of the year, in voracious and desolating myriads. It was just at this season, that the first crops of the new settlers were in the full glory of their youthful green. The assailants could not be repulsed. The Mormons, after their fashion, prayed and fought, and fought and prayed, but to no purpose. The "Black Philistines" mowed their way even with the ground, leaving it as if touched with an acid or burnt by fire.

But an unlooked for ally came to the rescue. Vast

armies of bright birds, before strangers to the valley, hastened across the lake from some unknown quarter, and gorged themselves upon the well fatted enemy. They were snow white, with little heads and clear dark eyes, and little feet, and long wings, that arched in flight "like an angel's." At first the Mormons thought they were new enemies to plague them; but when they found them hostile only to the locusts, they were careful not to molest them in their friendly office, and to this end declared a heavy fine against all who should kill or annoy them with firearms. The gulls soon grew to be tame as the poultry, and the delighted little children learned to call them their pigeons. They disappeared every evening beyond the lake; but, returning with sunrise, continued their welcome visitings till the crickets were all exterminated.

This curious incident recurred the following year, with this variation, that in 1849, the gulls came earlier and saved the wheat crops from all harm whatever.

A severer trial than the visit of the cricket-locusts threatened Deseret in the discovery of the gold of California. It was due to a party of the Mormon battalion recruited on the Missouri, who on their way home, found employment at New Helvetia. They were digging a mill race there, and threw up the gold dust with their shovels. You all know the crazy fever that broke out as soon as this was announced. It infected every one through California. Where the gold

was discovered, at Sutter's and around, the standing grain was left uncut; whites, Indians, and mustees, all set them to gathering gold, every other labor forsaken, as if the first comers could rob the casket of all that it contained. The disbanded soldiers came to the valley; they showed their poor companions pieces of the yellow treasure they had gained; and the cry was raised: "To California—To the Gold of Ophir, our brethren have discovered! To California!"

Some of you have perhaps come across the half ironic instruction of the heads of the Church, to the faithful outside the Valley:

"THE TRUE USE OF GOLD is for paving streets, covering "houses, and making culinary dishes; and, when the "Saints shall have preached the Gospel, raised grain, "and built up cities enough, the Lord will open up the "way for a supply of gold to the perfect satisfaction of "His People. Until then, let them not be over-"anxious, for the treasures of the earth are in the "Lord's storehouse, and he will open the doors thereof "when and where he pleases."—II. *Gen. Epistle*, 14.

The enlightened virtue of their rulers saved the people and the fortunes of Deseret. A few only went away—and they were asked in kindness never to return. The rest remained to be healthy and happy, to "raise grain and build up cities."

The history of the Mormons has ever since been the unbroken record of the most wonderful prosperity. It

has looked, as though the elements of fortune, obedient to a law of natural re-action, were struggling to compensate to them their undue share of suffering. They may be pardoned for deeming it miraculous. But, in truth, the economist accounts for it all, who explains to us the speedy recuperation of cities, laid in ruin by flood, fire and earthquake. During its years of trial, Mormon labor has subsisted on insufficient capital, and under many trials—but it *has* subsisted, and survives them now, as intelligent and powerful as ever it was at Nauvoo; with this difference, that it has in the meantime been educated to habits of unmatched thrift, energy and endurance, and has been transplanted to a situation where it is in every respect more productive. Moreover, during all the period of their journey, while some have gained by practice in handicraft, and the experience of repeated essays at their various halting-places, the minds of all have been busy framing designs and planning the improvements they have since found opportunity to execute.

The territory of the Mormons is unequalled as a stock-raising country. The finest pastures of Lombardy are not more estimable than those on the east side of the Utah Lake and Jordan River. We find here that cereal anomaly, the Bunch grass. In May, when the other grasses push, this fine plant dries upon its stalk, and becomes a light yellow straw, full of flavor and nourishment. It continues thus, through what are the dry

months of the climate, till January, and then starts with a vigorous growth, like that of our own winter wheat in April, which keeps on till the return of another May. Whether as straw or grass, the cattle fatten on it the year round. The numerous little dells and sheltered spots that are found in the mountains, are excellent sheep-walks; it is said that the wool which is grown upon them is of an unusually fine pile and soft texture. Hogs fatten on a succulent bulb or tuber, called the Seacoe, or Seegose Root, which I hope will soon be naturalized with us. It is highly esteemed as a table vegetable by Mormons and Indians, and I remark that they are cultivating it with interest at the French Garden of Plants. The emigrant poultry have taken the best of care of each other, only needing liberty to provide themselves with every other blessing.

The Mormons have also been singularly happy in their Indian relations. They have not made the common mistake of supposing savages insensible to courtesy of demeanor; but, being taught by their religion to regard them all as decayed brethren, have always treated the silly wicked souls with kind-hearted civility. Though their outlay for tobacco, wampum and vermillion has been of the very smallest, yet they have never failed to purchase what goodwill they have wanted.

Hence, it happens, that in their Land of Promise, they are on the best of terms with all the Canaanites and Hittites, and Hivites, and Amorites, and Gergash-

ites, and Perizzites, and Jebusites, within its borders; while they "maintain their cherished relations of amity with the rest of mankind," who, in their case, include a sort of latest remnant of the primæval primates, called the Root Diggers. The Diggers, who in stature, strength and general personal appearance, may be likened to a society of old negro women, are only to be dreaded for their exceeding ugliness. The tribes that rob and murder in war, and otherwise live more like white men, are however numerous all around them.

Fortunately, upon their marauding expeditions, and in matters that affect their freebooting relations generally, they all obey the great war chief of the tribe called the Utahs, in the heart of whose proper territory the Mormon settlements are comprehended.

If accounts are true, the Utahs are brave fellows. They differ obviously from the deceased nations, to whose estates we have taken it upon ourselves to administer. They ride strong, well-limbed Spanish horses, not ponies; bear well cut rifles, not shot-guns, across their saddle-bows, and are not without some idea of military discipline. They carry their forays far into the Mexican States, laying the inhabitants under contribution, and taking captive persons of condition, whom they hold to ransom. They are, as yet at least, little given to drink; some of them manifest considerable desire to acquire useful knowledge; and they are attached to their own infidel notions of religion, making long jour-

neys to the ancient cities of the Colorado, to worship among the ruined temples there. The Soldan of these red Paynims, too, their great war chief, is not without his knightly graces. According to some of the Mormons, he is the paragon of Indians. His name, translated to diminish its excellence as an exercise in Prosody, is Walker. He is a fine figure of a man, in the prime of life. He excels in various manly exercises, is a crack shot, a rough rider, and a great judge of horse flesh.

He is besides very clever, in our sense of the word. He is a peculiarly eloquent master of the graceful alphabet of pantomime, which stranger tribes employ to communicate with one another. He has picked up some English, and is familiar with Spanish and several Indian tongues. He rather affects the fine gentleman. When it is his pleasure to extend his riding excursions into Mexico, to inflict or threaten outrage, or to receive the instalments of his black mail salary, he will take offence if the poor people there fail to kill their fattest beeves, and adopt other measures to show him obsequious and distinguished attention. He has more than one black-eyed mistress there, according to his own account, to whom he makes love in her own language. His dress is a full suit of the richest broadcloth, generally brown, cut in European fashion, with a shining beaver hat, and fine cambric shirt. To these, he adds his own gaudy Indian trimmings, and in this way contrives, they say, to look superbly, when he rides at the head of

his troop, whose richly caparisoned horses, with their embroidered saddles and harness, shine and tinkle as they prance under their weight of gay metal ornaments.

With all his wild cat fierceness, Walker is perfectly velvet-pawed to the Mormons. There is a queer story about his being influenced in their favor, by a dream. It is the fact, that from the first, he has received the Mormon exiles into his kingdom, with a generosity, that in its limited sphere, transcends that of the Grand Monarch to the English Jacobites. He rejoices to give them the information they want about the character of the country under his rule, advises with them as to the advantages of particular localities, and wherever they choose to make their settlements, guarantees them personal safety and immunity from depredation.

From the first, therefore, the Mormons have had little or nothing to do in Deseret, but attend to their mechanical and strictly agricultural pursuits. They have made several successful settlements; the farthest North, at what they term Brownsville, is about forty miles, and the farthest South, in a valley called the Sanpeech, 200 miles, from that first formed. A duplicate of the Lake Tiberias, or Genesareth, empties its waters into the innocent Dead Sea of Deseret, by a fine river, to which the Mormons have given the name —it was impossible to give it any other—of the Western Jordan.

It was on the right bank of this stream, at a choice

spot upon a rich table land traversed by a great company of exhaustless streams falling from the highlands, that the Pioneer band of Mormons, coming out of the mountains in the night, pitched their first camp in the Valley, and consecrated the ground. Curiously enough, this very spot proved the most favorable site for their chief settlement, and after exploring the whole country, they have founded on it their city of the New Hierusalem. Its houses are spread to command as much as possible the farms, which are laid out in Wards or Cantons, with a common fence to each Ward. The farms in wheat already cover a space, greater than the District of Columbia, over all of which they have completed the canals, and other arrangements for bountiful irrigation, after the manner of the cultivators of the East. The houses are distributed over an area nearly as great as the City of New York.

They have little thought as yet of luxury in their public buildings. But they will soon have nearly completed a large common public store-house and granary, and a great sized public bath-house. One of the many wonderful thermal springs of the valley, a white sulphur water of the temperature of 102° Fahrenheit, with a head "the thickness of a man's body," they have already brought into the town for this purpose; and all have learned the habit of indulging in it. They have besides a yellow brick meeting-house, 100 feet by 60, in which they gather on Sundays and in the week-day

evenings. But this is only a temporary structure. They have reserved a summit level in the heart of the city, for the site of a Temple far superior to that of Nauvoo, which, in the days of their future wealth and power, is to be the landmark of the Basin and goal of future pilgrims.

They mean to seek no other resting-place. After pitching camps enough to exhaust many times over the chapter of names in 33d Numbers, they have at last come to their Promised Land, and, "behold, it is a good land and large, and flowing with milk and honey:" and here again for them, as at Nauvoo, the forge smokes and the anvil rings, and whirring wheels go round; again has returned the merry sport of childhood, and the evening quiet of old age, and again dear house-pet flowers bloom in garden plots round happy homes.

It is to these homes, in the heart of our American Alps, like the holy people of the Grand Saint Bernard, they hold out their welcome to the passing traveller. Some of you have probably seen in the St. Louis papers, the repeated votes of thanks to them of companies of emigrants to California. These are often reduced to great straights after passing Fort Laramie, and turn aside to seek the Salt Lake Colony in pitiable plights of fatigue and destitution. The road, after leaving the Oregon trace, is one of increasing difficulty, and when the last mountain has been crossed, passes along the bottom of a deep Cañon, whose scenery is of an almost

terrific gloom. It is a defile that I trust no Mormon Martin Hofer of this Western Tyrol will be called to consecrate to liberty with blood. At every turn the overhanging cliffs threaten to break down upon the little torrent river that has worn its way at their base. Indeed, the narrow ravine is so serrated by this stream, that the road crosses it from one side to the other, something like forty times in the last five miles. At the end of the ravine, the emigrant comes abruptly out of the dark pass into the lighted valley on an even bench or terrace of its upper table land. No wonder if he loses his self-control here. A ravishing panoramic landscape opens out below him, blue, and green, and gold, and pearl; a great sea with hilly islands, rivers, a lake, and broad sheets of grassy plain, all set, as in a silver chased cup, within mountains whose peaks of perpetual snow are burnished by a dazzling sun. It is less these, however, than the foreground of old-country farms, with their stacks and thatchings and stock, and the central city, smoking from its chimneys and swarming with working inhabitants, that tries the men of fatigue broken nerves. The 'Californeys' scream, they sing, they give three cheers, and do not count them, a few have prayed; more swear, some fall on their faces and cry outright. News arrived a few days since from a poor townsman of ours, a journeyman saddler, that used to work up Market street beyond Broad, by name Gillian, who sought the valley, his cattle given out, and himself broken down and

half heart-broken:—The recluse Mormons fed and housed him and his party, and he made his way through to the gold diggings with restored health and strength. To Gillian's credit for manhood, should perhaps be cited his own allegation, that he first whistled through his fingers various popular nocturnal, street, circus, and theatre calls; but it is certain that, when my tidings speak of him, which was when he was afterwards hospitably entreated by a Mormon, whom he knew ten years ago as one of our Chester County farmers, he was completely dissolved into something not far from the hysterics, and wept on till the tears ran down his dusty beard.

Several hundred emigrants, in more or less distress, received gratuitous assistance last year from the Mormons.

Their community must go on thriving. They are to be the chief workers and contractors upon "Whitney's Railroad," or whatever scheme is to unite the Atlantic and Pacific by way of the South Pass; and their valley must be its central station. They have already raised a "Perpetual Fund" for "the final fulfilment of the covenant made by the Saints in the Temple at Nauvoo," which "is not to cease till all the poor are brought to the valley." All the poor still lingering behind, will be brought there: so at an early period will the fifty thousand communicants, the Church already numbers in Great Britain, with all the other "increase among the

Gentiles." Their place of rendezvous will be upon what were formerly the Pottawatamie lands. The interests of this Stake have been admirably cared for. It now comprises the thriving counties of "Fremont" and "Pottawatamie," in which the Mormons still number a majority of the inhabitants. Their chief town is growing rapidly, already boasting over three thousand inhabitants, with nineteen large merchants' stores, the mail lines and five regular steam packets running to it, and other western evidences of prosperity; besides a fine Music Hall and public buildings, and the printing establishment of a very ably edited newspaper, "The Frontier Guardian."

It is probably the best station on the Missouri for commencing the overland journey to Oregon and California; as travellers can follow directly from it the Mormon road, which, in addition to other advantages, proves to be more salubrious than those to the south of it. Large numbers are expected to arrive at this point from England during the present spring, on their way to the Salt Lake. They will repay their welcome; for every working person gained to the hive of their "Honey State" counts as added wealth. So far, the Mormons write in congratulation, that they have not among them "a single loafer rich or poor, idle gentleman or lazy vagabond." They are no Communists; but their experience has taught them the gain of joint stock to capital, and combination to labor,—perhaps something

more, for I remark they have recently made arrangements to "classify their mechanics," which is probably a step in the right direction. They will be successful manufacturers, for their vigorous land-locked industry cannot be tampered with by protection. They have no gold—they have not hunted for it; but they have found wealth of other valuable minerals; rock salt enough to do the curing of the world,—"We 'll salt the Union for you," they write, "if you can't preserve it in any other way,"—perhaps coal, excellent ores of iron everywhere. They are near enough, however, to the Californian Sierra, to be the chief quartermasters of its miners; and they will dig their own gold in their unlimited fields of admirably fertile land. I should only invite your incredulity, and the disgust of the Horticultural Society, by giving you certain measurements of mammoth beets, turnips, pumpkins, and garden vegetables, in my possession. In that country where stock thrives care free, where a poor man's 32 potatoes saved can return him 18 bushels, and 2½ bushels of wheat sown yield 350 bushels in a season; or where an average crop of wheat on irrigated lands is 50 bushels to the acre; the farmer's part is hardly to be despised. Certainly it will not be under a continuance of the present prices current of the region,—wheat at $4 the bushel, and flour $12 the hundred, with a ready market.

The recent letters from Deseret interest me in one thing more. They are eloquent in describing the anni-

versary of the Pioneers' arrival in the Valley. It was the 24th of July, and they have ordained that that day shall be commemorated in future, like our 21st of December, as their Forefather's Day. The noble Walker attended as an invited guest, with two hundred of his best dressed mounted cavaliers, who stacked their guns and took up their places at the ceremonies and banquet, with the quiet precision of soldiers marched to mass. The Great Band was there too, that had helped their humble hymns through all the wanderings of the Wilderness. Through the many trying marches of 1846, through the fierce winter ordeal that followed, and the long journey after over plain and mountain, it had gone unbroken, without the loss of any of its members. As they set out from England, and as they set out from Illinois, so they all came into the valley together, and together sounded the first glad notes of triumph when the Salt Lake City was founded. It was their right to lead the psalm of praise. Anthem, song and dance, all the innocent and thankful frolic of the day owed them its chief zest. "They never were in finer key." The people felt their sorrows ended. Far West, their old settlement in Missouri, and Nauvoo; with their wealth and ease, like "Pithom and Ramses, treasure cities built for Pharaoh," went awhile forgotten. Less than four years had restored them every comfort that they needed. Their entertainment, the contribution of all, I have no doubt was really sumptuous. It was

spread on broad buffet tables about 1400 feet in length, at which they took their seats by turns, while they kept them heaped with ornamented delicacies. "Butter of kine, and milk, with fat of lambs, with the fat of kidneys of wheat;" "and the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic, and the remembered fish which we did eat in Egypt freely"—they seem unable to dilate with too much pride upon the show it made.

"To behold the tables," says one, that I quote from literally.

To behold them "filling the Bowery and all adjoining "grounds, loaded with all luxuries of the fields and gardens "and nearly all the varieties that any vegetable market "in the world could produce, and to see the seats around "those tables filled and refilled by a people who had "been deprived of those luxuries for years by the cruel "hand of oppression, and freely offering seats to every "stranger within their borders; and this, too, in the "Valley of the Mountains, over a thousand miles from "civilization, where, two years before, naught was to "be found save the wild root of the prairie and the "mountain cricket; was a theme of unbounded thanks-"giving and praise to the Giver of all Good, as the "dawning of a day when the Children of the Kingdom "can sit under their own vines and fig-trees, and in-"habit their own houses, having none to make them "afraid. May the time be hastened when the scattered

"Israel may partake of such like banquets from the "gardens of Joseph!"*

I have gone over the work I assigned myself when I accepted your Committee's invitation, as fully as I could do without trespassing too largely upon your courteous patience. But I should do wrong to conclude my lecture without declaring in succinct and definite terms, the opinions I have formed and entertain of the Mormon people. The libels, of which they have been made the subject, make this a simple act of justice. Perhaps, too, my opinion, even with those who know me as you do, will better answer its end following after the narrative I have given.

I have spoken to you of a people; whose industry had made them rich, and gathered around them all the comforts, and not a few of the luxuries of refined life; expelled by lawless force into the Wilderness; seeking an untried home far away from the scenes which their previous life had endeared to them; moving onward, destitute, hunger-sickened, and sinking with disease; bearing along with them their wives and children, the aged, and the poor, and the decrepid; renewing daily on their march, the offices of devotion, the ties of family and friendship, and charity; sharing necessities, and braving dangers together, cheerful in the midst of want

* Letter of the Presidency, Great Salt Lake City, Oct. 12, 1849.

and trial, and persevering until they triumphed. I have told, or tried to tell you, of men, who when menaced by famine, and in the midst of pestilence, with every energy taxed by the urgency of the hour, were building roads and bridges, laying out villages, and planting cornfields, for the stranger who might come after them, their kinsman only by a common humanity, and peradventure a common suffering,—of men, who have renewed their prosperity in the homes they have founded in the desert,—and who, in their new built city, walled round by mountains like a fortress, are extending pious hospitalities to the destitute emigrants from our frontier lines,—of men who, far removed from the restraints of law, obeyed it from choice, or found in the recesses their religion, something not inconsistent with human laws, but far more controlling; and who are now soliciting from the government of the United States, not indemnity,—for the appeal would be hopeless, and they know it—not protection, for they now have no need of it,—but that identity of political institutions and that community of laws with the rest of us, which was confessedly their birthright when they were driven beyond our borders.

I said I would give you the opinion I formed of the Mormons: you may deduce it for yourselves from these facts. But I will add that I have not yet heard the single charge against them as a Community, against their habitual purity of life, their integrity of dealing,

their toleration of religious differences in opinion, their regard for the laws, or their devotion to the constitutional government under which we live, that I do not from my own observation, or the testimony of others, know to be unfounded.

THE END.

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